

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 COPENHAGEN 0524

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SUBJ: CONFIDENTIAL DANISH REPORT ON CAMBODIA: MORTENSEN'S
CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT SAMPHAN AND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
SARY

REF: COPENHAGEN 0493

THE FOLLOWING IS OUR EMBASSY TRANSLATION OF ANOTHER
TELEGRAM (REFTEL) RECEIVED FROM THE DANISH FOREIGN OFFICE.
THE TELEGRAM IS THE REPORT OF DANISH AMBASSADOR TO PEKING
KJELD MORTENSEN'S CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT KHIEU
SAMPHAN AND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SARY WHEN HE PRESENTED
HIS LETTERS OF CREDENCE IN PHNOM PENH EARLIER THIS MONTH.

BEGIN TRANSLATION:

ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 1978, I PRESENTED MY CREDEN-
TIALS TO THE CHIEF OF STATE OF KAMPUCHEA KHIEU SAMPHAN.
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER IENG SARY WAS ALSO PRESENT. THE
CEREMONY WAS AS SIMPLE AS POSSIBLE, AND THE PRESIDENT
WENT STRAIGHT TO AN EXPLANATION OF THE SITUATION OF THE
COUNTRY. NATURALLY, THIS CENTERED ON THE CONFLICT WITH
VIETNAM.

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SAMPHAN APPEARED STRONG AND UNCOMPROMISING.
HE CALLED VIETNAM AGGRESSIVE AND "LAND HUNGRY."
HE SAID THERE WOULD BE NO PEACE UNTIL VIETNAM
RENOUNCED ITS DREAMS OF AN INDO-CHINESE FEDERATION.
REGRETTABLY, ALSO A COUPLE OF LARGE POWERS FOUND
IT DIFFICULT TO ACCEPT THAT EVEN SMALL COUNTRIES
HAD A RIGHT TO EXIST IN INDEPENDENCE. THE MIS-

FORTUNE OF KAMPOUCHEA WAS THAT IT WAS A SMALL COUNTRY WITH A SPARSE POPULATION SURROUNDED BY A COUPLE OF LARGE NEIGHBORS. HOWEVER, ITS SMALL SIZE NOTWITHSTANDING, KAMPUCHEA WAS PREPARED TO DEFEND ITSELF AT ALL COST AGAINST ANY AGGRESSOR. KAMPUCHEA HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN ATTACKED FROM ABROAD, BUT HAD PROVEN CAPABLE OF SURVIVING AND ABLE TO MAINTAIN ITS CULTURAL HERITAGE.

ON THE 18TH OF JULY 1977, KAMPUCHEA HAD DETAILED TO THE VIETNAMESE ITS CONDITIONS FOR THE NORMALIZATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. FIRST, A PEACEFUL ATMOSPHERE ALONG THE BORDER HAD TO BE ESTABLISHED AND ALL HOSTILITIES STOPPED. SECOND, THE VIETNAMESE HAD TO STOP THEIR SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES IN KAMPUCHEA. FINALLY, AS THE THIRD POINT, THEY PROPOSED THAT THE ARMED FORCES BE PULLED BACK 500-1000 METERS FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER. THE ONLY RESPONSE THEY HAD RECEIVED FROM THE VIETNAMESE WAS RENEWED AND STRENGTHENED MILITARY ATTACKS WITH FURTHER PENETRATION INTO THE KAMPUCHEAN AREA.

TO MY QUESTION WHETHER KAMPUCHEA CONSIDERED BRINGING THE MATTER BEFORE THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL, THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT SECRETARY GENERAL CONFIDENTIAL

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WALDHEIM HAD BEEN INFORMED ABOUT THE CONFLICT SO THAT THE WORLD COULD BE INFORMED OF THE DEVELOPMENTS. HOWEVER, IT WOULD SCARCELY HAVE ANY EFFECT TO BRING THE AFFAIR BEFORE THE SECURITY COUNCIL SINCE ONE WOULD SIMPLY GET A USELESS RESOLUTION BECAUSE VIETNAM WOULD IGNORE IT.

PRESIDENT KHIEU SAMPHAN ALSO DISCUSSED THE COUNTRY'S ENORMOUS RECONSTRUCTION TASK AFTER THE DEVASTATING FIVE-YEAR WAR. ALL EFFORTS HAD TO BE CONCENTRATED FIRST OF ALL ON INCREASING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION. FIRST AND FOREMOST THROUGH AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE IRRIGATION OF THE RICE PADDIES AND SECONDLY THROUGH A REBUILDING OF THE COUNTRY'S DESTROYED ROAD NETWORK AS WELL AS HOUSING FOR THE AGRICULTURAL POPULATION. SAMPHAN ALSO DWELT ON THE PROBLEMS OF THE LACK OF EDUCATED CADRES AND THE COUNTRY'S MEAGER REPRESENTATION ABROAD. I USED THIS OCCASION TO STATE THAT THE WORLD KNEW AND UNDERSTOOD VERY LITTLE OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED AND WAS GOING ON IN KAMPUCHEA IN THE LAST FEW YEARS AND THAT IT UNDOUBTEDLY WOULD BE IN THE COUNTRY'S OWN INTEREST, ESPECIALLY

IN THE PRESENT SITUATION, TO SHOW GREATER OPENNESS.
THE PRESIDENT RESPONDED WITH GOOD WILL TO THESE
THOUGHTS AND INDICATED THAT MEMBERS OF THE GOVERN-
MENT HAD STARTED TO TRAVEL ABROAD, PARTLY TO EXPAND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND PARTLY TO EXPLAIN THE
COUNTRY'S POLICIES JUST AS THEY WERE ATTEMPTING TO
GIVE EXPLANATIONS ABOUT THE COUNTRY THROUGH MORE
INTENSIVE USE OF THE RADIO.

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HOWEVER, THEY DID NOT YET HAVE THE STRENGTH TO RECEIVE FOREIGN
JOURNALISTS EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE AWARE OF THE PROBLEM.

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ABOVE DISCUSSION, THE
PRESIDENT INTERRUPTED HIS STATEMENTS TO BID ME
WELCOME TO KAMPUCHEA AND I HANDED OVER MY LETTERS
OF ACCREDITATION WITH A FEW WORDS ACCOMPANIED BY
THE TRADITIONAL GREETING FROM HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN.
SAMPHAN RESPONDED TO THE GREETING BOTH AT THIS TIME
AND LATER WHEN HE TOOK LEAVE OF ME ON THE STEPS OF
THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE.

BEFORE HANDING OVER MY LETTERS OF ACCREDITATION
I WAS RECEIVED ON THE 9TH OF JANUARY 1978 BY DEPUTY PRIME
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS IENG SARY WHO BID ME
WELCOME TO KAMPUCHEA AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT
MY ACCREDITATION MIGHT BE THE BEGINNING OF THE
DEVELOPMENT OF FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO
COUNTRIES. IENG SARY ALSO DWELT FOR A LONG TIME
ON THE CONFLICT WITH VIETNAM. KAMPUCHEA HAD FOR
AS LONG AS POSSIBLE TRIED TO IGNORE THE CONFRONTA-
TION SITUATION BUT LATER IT GRADUALLY BECAME MORE

AND MORE CLEAR THAT VIETNAM DID NOT UNDERSTAND
KAMPUCHEA'S POSITION, NAMELY, THE DESIRE TO BE
INDEPENDENT AND NOT GO INTO AN INDO-CHINESE FEDERA-
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TION WHICH WAS VIETNAM'S GOAL AND WHICH IT TRIED
TO REALIZE IN VARIOUS WAYS. IT WAS CHARACTERISTIC
THAT VIETNAM ALWAYS TOOK ADVANTAGE OF KAMPUCHEA'S
PERIODS OF EAKNESSS. DURING PRINCE SIHANOUK'S
STAY IN PEKING, THE VIETNAMESE SET UP AN ADMINIS-
TRATION IN NORTHEASTERN KAMPUCHEA IN HIS NAME, EVEN
THROUGH IT HAD TO BE CLEAR TO THE VIETNAMESE THAT
SIHANOUK WAS COMPLETELY OUT OF TOUCH WITH DEVELOP-
MENTS IN HIS OWN COUNTRY. IENG SARY, IN ANOTHER
CONNECTION, MADE FURTHER CRITICAL COMMENTS ABOUT
PRINCE SIHANOUK WHO, EVEN THOUGH HE KNEW BETTER, HAD
ACCUSED THE RED KHMER OF SERVING VIETNAMESE INTERESTS.
THE PRESENT REGIME NEVERTHELESS INSISTS THAT SIHANOUK
NORMALLY LIVES IN THE PALACE ADJACENT TO THE SILVER
PAGODA. BUT DURING MY VISIT TO PHNOM PENH, HE WAS
SAID TO BE ABSENT BECAUSE OF THE RICE HARVEST.

IN 1970, THE VIETNAMESE HAD PROPOSED TO THE
KAMPUCHEANS A FEDERATION WITH A (FORMAL) CAMBODIAN
PRESIDENT AND A VIETNAMESE VICE PRESIDENT. IN 1975
THE VIETNAMESE HAD WARNED THE RED ARMY AGAINST A
GENERAL ATTACK ON PHNOM PENH BECAUSE THEY WISHED TO
END THEIR OWN WAR FIRST AND THEREAFTER "ASSIST" IN
THE FIGHT FOR KAMPUCHEA. SINCE SEPTEMBER 1977 THE
RELATIONSHIP HAD CONTINUALLY DETERIORATED AND IT
HAD BEEN VIETNAM'S INTENTION TO CAPTURE THE PROVIN-
CIAL CAPITAL SVAY RIENG IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH A
PUPPET GOVERNMENT THERE. THE VIETNAMESE HAD ORDERED
14 DIVISIONS INTO OPERATION, OF WHICH SEVEN WERE IN
KAMPUCHEAN TERRITORY. HOWEVER, KAMPUCHEA HAD
THROWN ITS ENTIRE STRENGTH INTO AN EFFORT TO PUSH
THEM BACK. A CONDITION FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION WAS
THAT VIETNAM GIVE UP ITS DREAMS OF HEGEMONY OVER
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KAMPUCHEA.

RESPONDING TO A QUESTION IENG SARY SAID THAT
THERE EXISTED DISAGREEMENTS OVER THE DEMARKATION LINE
AND AS PROOF OF KAMPUCHEA'S PEACEFUL INTENTION, HE
SAID THAT THEY HAD NOT ATTEMPTED TO RECONQUER THE

ISLAND PHU QUOC WHICH HAD BEEN ADMINISTRATIVELY TRANSFERRED BY THE FRENCH COLONIAL POWER FROM CAMBODIA TO COCHIN CHINA IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT 90 PERCENT OF THE ISLAND'S POPULATION WAS KHMER. (THE LARGEST PART OF THE ISLAND LIES OUTSIDE OF KAMPUCHEA'S COASTLINE AND ONE SHOULD NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE OWNERSHIP RELATIONSHIP OF THE ISLAND COULD CAUSE FURTHER COMPLICATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH THE DEMARKATION OF THE TERRITORIAL SEA.)

WITH RESPECT TO THE RELATIONSHIP TO THE MAJOR POWERS, IENG SARY SAID THAT IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THE SOVIET UNION SUPPORTED VIETNAMESE IDEAS OF A UNION. AS FAR AS CHINA WAS CONCERNED IT HAD NOT ATTEMPTED TO INFLUENCE KAMPUCHEA BUT HAD SAID THAT THE COUNTRY COULD ACT THE WAY IT FOUND RIGHT. IENG SARY FURTHER EMPHASIZED THAT SHOULD CHINA ATTEMPT TO SEEK INFLUENCE IN KAMPUCHEA, HIS PEOPLE WOULD REACT IN THE SAME WAY AS THEY DID WITH RESPECT TO VIETNAM. FURTHER AMPLIFYING ON THE RELATIONSHIP TO THE SOVIET UNION, I CAN INFORM THAT IENG SARY TOLD MY FINNISH COLLEAGUE THAT LAST YEAR THE SOVIET UNION HAD PROPOSED TO ESTABLISH AN EMBASSY WITH 200 EMPLOYEES. THIS WAS REJECTED JUST AS IT WAS ALSO NOT DESIRED TO RECEIVE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE SOVIET UNION. FURTHERMORE, IENG SARY MADE A CRITICAL REMARK ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION'S DIPLOMATIC CONNECTION TO THE LON NOL REGIME.

AS IS APPARENT FROM THE ABOVE, PRESIDENT KHIEU
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SAMPHAN, AS WELL AS VICE PRESIDENT IENG SARY, TOOK PLENTY OF TIME TO EXPLAIN THE COUNTRY'S PRESENT FOREIGN POLITICAL SITUATION, ESPECIALLY IF ONE CONSIDERED THAT THIS WAS A PROTOCOL VISIT. BOTH APPEARED LOW-KEY IN THEIR EXPLANATION AND AT NO TIME WAS THERE ANY EMOTIONAL QUALITY TO THEIR STATEMENTS.
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